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ABSTRACT

This paper applies the concept of educational partnership to the problem of drug use among students. The present structure of public education in the United States is critiqued, and a new structure based on shared responsibility of home, school, and community, and on the voice, educational choice, and loyalty of participants, is proposed. The greatest educational contribution schools can make to the prevention of drug abuse is to change schooling from a "winners and losers" to a success-oriented enterprise. The most important social contribution schools can make is to stop giving a home in the schools to student drug culture. School structures based on delegated authority result in abandonment of students, fail to meet their psychological needs, and give rise to tight peer cultures. Service delivery approaches to education and associated disengagement models should be replaced by a caring approach based on an engagement model. If schools are to be successful in helping to prevent drug abuse, important aspects of moral and academic education must be addressed. These include overcoming obstacles to moral education, recreating a concept of childhood, implementing cooperative education strategies, clarifying mixed messages about drugs, and emphasizing intellectual values. (RH)

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SCHOOLS AND DRUGS

Educational Partnership as a Remedy for the School Drug Problem

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Introduction

This paper does not attempt to deal with the full range of issues regarding student use of drugs. Its purpose is to apply a concept I call "educational partnership" to the problem and see whether this produces any useful insights for helping school systems and communities deal with it more productively. Although private schools share some of the same problems, their situation is significantly different, and this paper will focus only on public schools.

The partnership concept critiques the present structure of public education in the United States in which the basic roles and relationships of the participants are determined by the delegation of education to government agencies and by bureaucratic control and accountability within those agencies. It proposes instead a new structure based on shared responsibility of home, school, and community, and on the voice, choice and loyalty of the participants.

Although some of the conclusions reached by applying this concept to the school drug problem are stated strongly, they are offered in the spirit of dialogue and are open to correction in the light of fuller consideration the many difficult issues involved in drug use by school children.

I. First of all, Do No Harm

"Schools are a major cause of drug addiction," was the response of a young man I queried when I was a few weeks into this project. He had had experience with drugs in school, and I had asked him the normal question: "What could schools do to help prevent drug abuse?" His reply was, literally speaking, unresponsive, since he did not say what schools could "do." But his point could not easily be dismissed.

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Nor was I inclined to dismiss it. My analysis was bringing me to the same uncomfortable conclusion. I had a problem, however: How could I say this without alienating some of the most important people who have to respond to the situation--school officials who already see themselves unfairly "blamed" for everything from the stock market crash to teenage pregnancy? And now drug addiction too?

If there is anything for which school staffs might expect not to be blamed, it is drugs, which seem like a terrible invading force from "outside" the school, subverting and disrupting everything the school stands for. On top of that, schools probably devote more resources to this problem than any other social agency, with many talented teachers, counselors, and administrators working diligently to help kids stay off drugs. And now we want to blame the schools for being a major cause of the drug problem?

Let me say at the outset, therefore, that my purpose is not to blame. I see school staffs as much victims of the situation as the students (although usually less badly hurt). I hope they will suspend judgment, therefore, and not take this analysis personally. I ask them to see if the following analysis makes sense, and if so, if it could lead to steps that might help both schools and communities out of their present no-win situation.

The first step is to look honestly at the reality of drugs and schools. The reality is that, despite the many efforts of school staffs, they are fighting a losing battle. Thousands of youngsters are still falling into the deadly grip of drugs. The forces drawing them in are simply more powerful than all the efforts being made to keep them out.

Yes, one can see many non-school causes for this: family problems, poverty, unemployment, community influences, neighborhood gangs, rampant drug pushing, the adult drug culture, the anxieties of modern life, etc.

Yet, one also sees two factors that are very much school-related (not saying who's to "blame" for them--just that they are school-related; we can consider later whether schools can do anything about them):

(1) Large numbers of students are developing <u>in school</u> a sense of <u>alienation</u> and loss of self-esteem and therefore ripenesss for drugs.

(2) Large numbers of students are finding <u>in school</u> a student <u>drug culture</u> ready and eager to embrace them when they <u>feel beset</u> with problems, including school-related alienation or loss of self-esteem.

Each of these factors would be enough by itself to draw many children into drugs. In combination they are lethal. Schools are in effect pushing many children into drugs by convincing them they are "failures" and alienating them in other ways, and by providing them, right on the premises, a ready-made drug culture to welcome them, sooth their wounded egos, and provide them with social and psychological supports to relieve their alienation.

These factors have become so powerful in so many schools that one wonders how so many students escape drugs. Here is where the efforts of many school people and parents, not to mention the impressive fortitude of many of the kids themselves, deserve special credit--in managing to prevent involvement with drugs in the face of these two potent forces.

But why need they fight such an uphill battle? Is it necessary to have so much failure and alienation in school? And is it necessary for schools to give a home to a student drug culture?

The concept that comes most forcefully to mind when I look at these realities comes not from educational theory, but from medicine: FIRST OF ALL, DO NO HARM! (or Primus non nocere, for those who heed only Latin warnings). It should be the first priority of educational policy in relation to drugs to do no harm--to eliminate or reduce these two school-related influences that contribute so powerfully to childhood drug use. We have given a lot of effort to special drug prevention programs, but perhaps we should "first of all" eliminate practices that help push kids into drugs.

This surely was what the young man was implying in response to my question: Why ask what schools should do to stop drug use, when the much more important issue is to get them to stop doing things that cause drug use.

Let me reiterate that in coming to this conclusion, my purpose is not to blame school authorities. Surely no school authorities intentionally try to create student alienation, unnecessary failure, or a school drug culture. But then, neither were doctor's trying to kill all the patients who died from septic wounds in the early hospitals. However, when doctors found that many patients were dying because of unsterilized equipment, they changed medical practices to reduce the unintended harm. So, likewise, if we want to be serious about schools helping to prevent drug abuse, we must we look to see if there are ways in which schools are doing unintended harm that could be stopped or reduced.

My overall conclusion is that there are indeed ways--very powerful ways--in which schools contribute to childhood alienation and drug culture--not by the evil intention of school staffs, but in spite of their good intentions--and not because of incompetence or sloth, but in spite of considerable skill and diligence. Schools cause this unintended harm because of the very structure of public education.

The three primary concepts underlying the structure of public education in the United States as it has developed over the last one hundred years are delegation, bureaucracy, and professional service delivery. These have all seemed valid and worthwhile concepts: We have delegated the function of education to a government agency for many of the same reasons we have delegated other functions--police, fire, sanitation, defense, etc. We have bureaucratized it because that seemed the most efficient way to organize such large systems. And we have defined education as professional service delivery because that seemed the way to improve the services delivered. (The motives have been more complicated than this, as I and others have explained elsewhere, but the mainstream motives are not far from these simplified versions [1]).

The big problem is that, in the process, we have created highly alienating institutions. Schools of course do not alienate all children; for many children they function as intended, to help them gain the competence and confidence they need to speed along life's way. But as schools have become ever larger, more bureaucratized and more dehumanized, as increasing numbers of children have become dependent on school success for success in life, and as family and community conditions have caused more children to need a caring environment, the alienating nature of many public schools confronts us with a dangerous situation: Many children instead of being helped by them are actually being hurt.

This analysis may sound too "soft" and tender-hearted for something as evil and dangerous as drugs. "Tough love," "wars" against drugs, and principals with baseball bats, have become the more popular images for dealing with this fearsome threat. But toughness is not the issue. Sometimes toughness is needed--and sometimes tenderness--but what makes Tough Love succeed is the love, and what makes tenderness succeed is when loving care goes with it. I suspect that even what makes Joe Clark with his baseball bat appealing to many parents and students is they sense loving care underlying the bluster. [2]

Children need loving care--both tender and tough--to grow up whole. And too many of them are not getting it. Surely the condition of families and communities are a major reason for this,

but those conditions are not likely to improve soon. Meanwhile, schools, by the way we have structured them, contribute their own alienating forces to an already desperate situation. That is something that can be changed, and something that must be changed if schools are to be more of a solution than a problem in preventing drug abuse (or, for that matter, in dealing with juvenile delinquency, mental illness, teen-age pregnancy and any number of other problems).

I realize that by this line of reasoning I have turned things upside down. The usual question for educational policy is how to reduce drug use in order to improve schools, not how to improve schools in order to reduce drug use. Likewise, school drug culture is usually seen as something for which students are responsible that threatens the school, not something for which the school is responsible that threatens the students. But sometimes it's useful to look at things upside down when examining them. Besides, that's what results when you apply the formula, "First of all, do no harm" to the reality of schools and drugs in today's world. If indeed schools are doing harm in regard to drugs, albeit unintentionally (and I believe they are on a massive scale), then there is a heavy responsibility to try to stop this harm if possible.

But is it possible? I believe it is. Furthermore, I believe schools can not only greatly reduce alienation and school-based drug culture, but they can also, in the process, do a much better job of providing children with the competence and self-confidence they need to resist non-school-related drug influences.

But the process will not be easy, and it will involve much more than just changing the schools--which is why this analysis is not out to "blame" the schools or their staffs. It will require serious rethinking by society as a whole about its educational goals and about the structure of the educational system it needs to achieve its goals.

I will focus first on the problem of educational goals, and how the present "winners and losers" approach to education produces an unnecessarily high level of failure, alienation and loss of self-esteem--and thus susceptibility to drugs. I will suggest that a policy of "success for all" is not a romantic pipe dream, but a practical and even necessary goal for American education as it moves toward the 21st century. I will then look at the structure of public education and suggest that only through restructured schools and shared responsibility of home, school and community are we likely to be able to achieve this new goal.

II. Changing Schools from a Winners and Loser Game to a Success-Oriented Enterprise.

After reviewing the considerable efforts schools make to prevent drug use and abuse, I come to one overwhelming conclusion for school policy:

The greatest educational contribution schools can make to the prevention of drug abuse is to change schooling from a winners and losers game to a success-oriented enterprise.

Conversely, continuing with the winners and losers approach to education will undermine all other drug prevention efforts the schools may undertake. So long as schools continue to produce "losers" they will be helping to produce drug users.

This may seem an irrelevant, impractical, and altogether irritating conclusion, since, of course, everyone these days would like to see schools more successful (or least they say they would), and all sorts of efforts are afoot to bring this about. So why don't we get back to the point of this project and direct our attention to matters more directly related to drugs and drug abuse?

The answer is this: "Making schools more successful"--which is usually translated into "raising test scores"--is not the same thing as shifting the basic value structure of schools from a winners and losers principle to a "win-win" or "success for all" principle. Few school improvement efforts have faced the implications of this value shift, and yet it is this shift that could make the most difference in children's use of drugs (as well as in their academic achievement and many other things).

Children and youth these days face many daunting problems from home and community that are beyond the schools' control and that help drive kids to drugs. [3] But often a key problem facing many of them is the loss of self-esteem due to failure in school--either obvious failure (of courses, promotion gates, etc.) or the less palpable failure of not being a winner in the winners and losers game even if receiving "passing" grades. In either case it is the negative self-judgment and the accompanying alienation from school, school staffs, and school authority that leads to ripeness for drugs.

In many cases this negative self-concept is a prime factor in drug use, but even in cases where there are many other factors involved, school failure may often be the "last straw." We present school to children as a "way out" of the miseries of poverty, broken homes, neighborhood decay, etc. that may be besetting them--a way to start a new life based on new

competencies and new relationships. When this last avenue of escape seems cut off by school failure, the one last hope is gone. The combined blow to the child's self-esteem and to his or her hope for regaining it is too much for many children to bear.

Isn't this a little unreasonable? Don't some kids, by definition, have to fail in school in order for "success" to mean anything? If everyone succeeds, doesn't that just mean we have "no standards"? Isn't a "no failure" policy what has led to such a dreadful mess in the schools, with kids being promoted from grade to grade without learning anything, until they drop out--or graduate with a diploma they can't read?

Here we come to some of the most harmful confusions in educational policy. I'm not talking about just reducing the appearance of failure by passing students along who haven't learned. I'm talking about reducing the reality of failure--making sure students actually learn and gain the competence they need to function in today's world. For in today's world, school failure is a stepping stone to life failure.

Success in school was not always needed for success in life. In times past, when children failed in school they could make their way in society through other routes--farm, factory, or family enterprise. Even as late as the early 1900's less than 10% of our children finished high school. The 90% weren't called "dropouts." They weren't necessarily looked down upon. They were the "salt of the earth," the productive people of American society, the "do-ers," as opposed to the "bookish" kids who liked to study and who were not always respected in a work-oriented America.

Within this framework, "winning" or "losing" at school did not cause such problems of self-esteem. Only a relatively small percentage of students were expected to be school "winners," and a major function of school was to sort them out, while the rest went off to live their lives with their egos intact.

Now there is no room in our society for school failures. Not quite "no room," for there is, and must be, room for some who are truly incapable of achieving success in school, but the numbers are much smaller and involve such special circumstances that "no room" is a more useful description of the role school success plays in the lives of today's children. We are moving toward a single "rite of passage" for entry into full membership in American society, and it is no longer just a high school diploma; it is actual success in school. Students who feel they cannot "make it" in school feel left out--alienated not just from school but from mainstream society. We have to look at success in school more like walking and talking--something every child is expected to do unless they have a physical handicap that makes it impossible.

This is the most profound change in American society affecting education, and thus far educational policy has failed to adjust to it. Public leaders are finally beginning to recognize the seriousness of this failure. The National Commission on Excellence in Education helped to put the problem on the nation's agenda, when it sounded the alarm about our "unilateral educational disarmament" and the "rising tide of mediocrity" in our schools. The report was misleading in suggesting that the main problem is increasing mediocrity when the the more serious problem is increasing educational expectations that are outstripping educational achievements. But the alarmist style of the Commission's report alerted people to the seriousness of our educational crisis. Business, political and educational leaders have been speaking out ever since about the short-fall between our educational needs and our educational achievements.

We are finally becoming conscious of the very large numbers of our children who are in effect "failing" in school. The degree of "failure" is of course relative to one's expectations. Many people think of the "failures" only in terms of those who have dropped out, but we are also becoming aware that even many of those who graduate from high school have in fact failed to learn to any reasonable standard—some of them being even unable to read a bus schedule or make change.

Albert Shanker, President of the American Federation of Teachers, has estimated that only between 15% and 20% of our children are getting the education they need [4]. By that standard, between 80% and 85% of our youngsters could be considered "failing" in school, and that figure might not be far off if we are looking for citizens not only with basic literacy skills, but with reasonable grasp of history, literature, science, math, the arts and critical thinking, not to mention responsible citizenship. Nor might such a high figure be far off as an estimate of the children who <u>feel</u> to one degree or another they are not "winning" in school. In schools where only the "nerds" are expected to enjoy learning, the vast majority of students are quick to identify themselves as non-nerds—i.e. not really engaged in what the school is supposed to be about.

We are also beginning to realize the dire consequences of school failure both for the children involved and for the society as a whole—in terms of economic productivity, unemployment, mental health, family stability, crime, etc. But nowhere does the failure have more immediate and tragic consequences than in relation to drugs. The loss of economic productivity and other harmful consequences of school failure are indirect and long term, but a child's entry into a drug culture can follow swiftly upon his realization that he is a "loser" so far as school is concerned.

Not every child who feels a "loser" in school becomes a drug addict; nor has every addict suffered defeat in school. But the tens of thousands of young people who follow the path from school "loser," to alienation from school and adult authority, to drug use and abuse is overpowering testimony to the effects of this relationship.

If we want schools to make a significant contribution to preventing drug abuse we must find a way to reduce school failure. But we must still ask, is this possible?

When William Glasser came out with his book, Schools Without Failure in the 1960's, many people dismissed it as yet more impractical romanticism. [5] But Dr. Glasser was serious, and more and more people are finally coming to see that his goal is realistic—in fact far more realistic than the current assumption that we can afford to allow so many children to become "failures."

At the same time, those who have become serious about preventing school failure also recognize that achieving this goal won't be simple—that in fact it can't be done within the way we presently operate public schools. The gap is too great and the problems too fundamental. As a result there is an increasing recognition of the need for "restructuring" public education.

There are many different ideas about the kind of "restructuring" needed—all the way from changing the internal operations of schools to abolishing schools altogether. [6] My own views on restructuring are set forth in my book, Education Through Partnership and various articles. [7] This paper cannot discuss them in detail, but the basic concepts can be summarized as follows:

1. The goal of school success for all children should be recognized as a fundamentally new goal for American society. A major reason we have failed to achieve it up to now is not just because we have been lazy, incompetent or stingy, but because it has not been our society's operational goal (I'm not talking about individual educators who may have had this goal). Whatever our rhetoric about "equal educational opportunity," our de facto operational goal has been at best to provide "equal educational services for all" (and even on this goal we have fallen far short), with success expected along a range all the way from quite high academic achievement to a large degree of minimal literacy (the famous "bell curve" for those more academically inclined), and with the lower end of the range expected for lower socio-economic groups.

This shift in goals means more than just "raising standards," "upgrading expectations" or "improving achievement scores," although it would involve all of these things. It is almost an ideological or value change—a change from seeing school as a "winners and losers" game to seeing it as a "win-win" game in which everyone succeeds—a shift from "every man for himself and the Devil take the hindmost" to "we're all in this together."

I prefer the phase "prevention of school failure," rather than "reduction of school failure," because, although "prevention" sounds unreasonable, it signals a different value orientation. It plays a role similar to the "no rejects" or "100%" goals in some of our most successful industries. [8] These companies are aware that they cannot reach 100%, but they are also aware that the whole spirit of the enterprise changes when this is their goal.

The shift from "winners and losers" to "success for all" thus means making school into a very different kind of institution, with a different ethos, and with different values permeating all its members. It means looking at every individual child not as a number in a statistical average, or a dot on a bell curve, but as a growing human being whose life is in jeopardy if he or she becomes a school "failure." It means making sure that whatever is being tried is really working and if it isn't to try something else, and not just saying, "we delivered our instructional services and if he didn't learn that's his lookout."

It also means starting early. Most of the fuss over "drop-outs" is now made at the high school level, after most of the potential drop-outs have lived with school failure for a number of years and built it into their personality. A success-oriented educational system would focus on the early years to make sure that the failure syndrome never develops.

This shift in goals is not to be taken lightly—so much so that some people might even wonder whether such a radical change is "unAmerican," or socialist, communist, or even "totalitarian" ("you're not allowed to fail even if you want to"). Without space to address these interesting questions fully here, I will only make two points in the context of this paper: (1) This shift does not eliminate competition. Schools can still let students compete to be the best math student, poet, debater, or runner. It just means that no one is expected to fail to meet adequate standards. Children seem to be able to accept this combination of competition and basic competence for all, even if many adults can't. (2) There is no way to achieve the educational levels now needed—and no way to eliminate the levels of school alienation and failure pushing so many children into drugs—without this shift.

2. Our present model or structure for public education is incapable of achieving this new goal. It was fashioned over many years to achieve the old goal of winners and losers. It's basic components of delegation of education to government agencies at various levels, bureaucratic organization separate from other social service agencies, top-down management, and bureaucratized professionalization, result in the disempowerment of the key participants—students, parents, and teachers—and the abdication by other members of the community of responsibility for all aspects of education except paying taxes and choosing school boards.

The present delegation model of public schooling doesn't mobilize or coordinate enough resources, either from within or from outside the school. It doesn't provide the professional working conditions needed to attract the most able teachers or to generate the kind of collegiality or accountability needed at the school level. It doesn't provide the kind of flexibility needed to adjust to the needs and learning styles of individual children. It doesn't provide the kind of social and psychological supports needed to encourage children to keep trying until they succeed.

Whatever one thinks of the merits of the present structure for the previous educational goals of American society, which accepted a large degree of school failure and mediocrity, it is simply too ineffective and inefficient for achieving goals that call for "excellence" and success for all children.

3. A different structure, with much more shared responsibility and collaboration (or "partnership") among students, teachers, administrators, parents, peers, other social agencies, and community—and more voice, choice and loyalty among all participants at all levels—would be able to achieve the new goals—assuming (as mentioned in #1 above) that society is serious about achieving them.

The essence of the partnership approach is a new goal and a new way to achieve it. Just the partnership without the new goal, or the new goal without the partnership, would not work. But the combination fits together, just as the old goal of school winners and losers fits with the delegation, bureaucratic, non-collaborative model.

Stated even more simply, the thesis says that if we work together we can achieve school success for all children (or much closer to it); and if we don't work together, we can't. The job simply cannot be done without the help of parents, peers, other agencies and the community. With their help it can be

achieved. Simple as this sounds, it represents a profoundly different outlook from what has prevailed up until now.

Because this structure of relationships is so different from the present one, it will take considerable time and institutional change to shift over to it, and there a number components to making such a shift. The one I want to discuss in some greater detail, because it may also have particular relevance to drug prevention, is the creation of supportive communities of people—intergenerational, and both in and out of school—working together for common goals at the school and community level. It is only through such supportive communities that schools will be able to cope with school-based drug cultures.

III. Preventing Drug Culture Through Partnership

Just as my analysis has led to one overwhelming conclusion regarding the main educational contribution schools can make to drug prevention—to stop producing the failure and alienation of the present winners and losers game—so it has led to one overwhelming conclusion regarding the most important social contribution schools can make:

Schools must stop giving a home to student drug culture.

And just as with "preventing school failure," the question surely will be: "Great! But how?" And "Is it possible?"

As with preventing school failure, my conclusion is that it isn't possible within the existing structure of public education. But it is possible within a different structure based on "partnership." The same changes that could help us prevent school failure, could also enable us finally to get a grip on this devastating social blight in our schools. In fact, both goals—a success oriented school, and a drug-free school--are largely overlapping, and in working on them together, through partnership, each goal would support the other.

As with school failure also, a major issue is how serious society is about this problem. Student drug culture in our schools has become so pervasive that we assume nothing can be done about it. We assume it is something perpetrated by "them" (the kids—those aliens), and therefore not "our" responsibility. In all too many schools, we have come to take it for granted.

Yet, when we stand back and look at it, it is surely an abomination. An outrage. Something we wouldn't permit for a

minute if we hadn't become so paralyzed by our feelings of helplessness. How can we send our children—our children—off to institutions which contains such a powerful social engine for drawing them to their ruin? It's almost like feeding children into a meat grinder. And yet we do it routinely every day.

Of course, "we" doesn't mean everyone. Many parents choose a particular community or school precisely to protect their children from such risks. But there are fewer and fewer schools or communities where their children are safe. And many parents don't have the money, freedom or knowledge to make such choices. Many more feel powerless to swim against the tide of such widely accepted social practices. So, in effect, "we" do it—our society does it—to hundreds of thousands of children every day—more or less without thinking about it. Perhaps it is too painful to think about.

If we decide we are serious about this abomination and want to put a stop to it, we must ask ourselves whether this is likely within the present structure of public education. Some schools have managed to prevent or eliminate a student drug culture through tough enforcement and enlightened drug education, but my own assessment is that in many communities (probably a growing number), this will not be enough. The out-of-school influences, together with in-school alienation, are too great to overcome with these methods alone. I suggest that the "partnership" concept provides an additional approach that can make the difference between success and failure in reducing school-based drug culture. Let's see in some greater detail how it would look.

The partnership model calls for public education to have more shared responsibility among the people who can help children grow up whole, and less delegated responsibility to various agencies which are designed to deliver their separate services. It calls for relationships based more on the "voice, choice and loyalty" of the participants and less on formal, rationalized, bureaucratic accountability systems.

This may seem abstract, but what it would mean concretely is that if schools were doing their main job (i.e. ensuring educational success for all children) in the most effective and efficient way possible (i.e. through partnership of family, school, and community), there would be supportive, intergenerational "communities" of people working together to achieve the shared goals of educational success.

These "communities" could operate at all levels, from the triad of parent, teacher and child, up through classrooms, schools, school-and-social agency collaborations, city-wide

coalitions, all the way to whole states. Much more "voice" and "choice" among the participants would be key ways for creating "loyalty," or the sense of community that is at the heart of the partnership concept.

"Choice" may be the easiest of these concepts to grasp, since it can be seen immediately that parents, students or teachers who choose a particular school or program will have a greater sense of ownership and loyalty, and will be more likely to find congenial "partners" who share their values and goals.

We are beginning to provide more choice in public education, and it seems to be having these anticipated effects. Some voucher proposals, of course, would base almost the entire relationship in education on choice, but they are very problematical and have thus far been rejected in most states and school districts. Short of full vouchers, however, there are many ways to create more opportunities for choice within public school systems--both choice of schools and choice of programs, and choice for teachers as well as choice for students and families. All assuming that choice is recognized as an important element of successful education. [9]

"Voice" is a little harder to grasp, but if one thinks of the relationships among people who have not chosen to be together, it is easy to see that communication would be important in forging a sense of common purpose and collaboration. Even if people have the same goals and values, they may not realize it and gain a sense of group loyalty and community, until they have expressed their goals and aspirations to each other. Voice is a fundamental process and value in its own right in any democratic society, not just because people have a "right" to express themselves, but because it is essential to forging shared purposes and goals.

If schools are going to be run on a partnership basis, we need more genuine dialogue in classrooms, more opportunity for students, parents and teachers to listen to each other, greatly improved parent-teacher conferences, more collegial relationships among school staff, more effective school-site planning groups, more parent work-shops, more peer-tutoring and counseling, more "cooperative learning" and "team learning," more collaboration and communication among social agencies, and more effective discussions of school policy at the school and community level.

"Communities" based on voice or choice do exist to one degree or another in some public schools. But objective observation would have to conclude that they are not the norm, especially in large school systems and large schools. Most public schools consist of people who have been brought together by abstract

and impersonal student and teacher assignment policies, whose relationships with each other are defined by job descriptions, hierarchy, legal responsibilities, and traditional school roles (e.g. "teacher" and "student"), not by their membership in a community of shared purposes.

Could such "partnership" communities have any relationship to preventing student drug culture? They certainly should help. Alientated school-based peer cultures are not invasions from outer space; they are to a large extent natural reactions to the structural conditions we have created in our schools. They fill a vacuum--the need for psychological and social support. School partnership could fill it in a much more healthy way.

Children enter tight peer cultures cut off from responsible adult influence because they are in effect abandoned by adults. Delegation means abandonment. We may meet our legal responsibilities by setting up public schools and sending our children to them to be educated. But we are not meeting our psychological responsibilities. We may pay more for schools and youth services than any other society on earth, but if the basic relationship is delegation, a key psychological link between home and school, and between child and society, is broken.

Look at it this way: We take children out of their homes and send them off to large, impersonal institutions, where they are shuttled around according to schedules and bells, and treated like numbers on a chart. Is it any wonder that they cluster into peer groups, cut off from adults? They are social beings, just like adults--maybe more so during these vulnerable years. They need human community. When the school and adult community fail to provide it, they are virtually driven into communities of their own.

Another way to look at this problem is that we have increasingly defined adults' relationship to children in terms of "service delivery" rather than "caring." This is a result of the heavily institutionalized, bureaucratized, and professionalized structure of our society, with public schools by far the most pervasive instance of this structure in the lives of children. "Services" are something that institutions, bureaucracies, and professions can deliver to someone. Caring is something that human beings do with and for each other. Services can be controlled bureaucratically. Caring is almost by definition non-bureaucratic.

The service delivery mentality is inherently dehumanizing. It turns students into "clients," who can be kept at arm's length. It thinks of students as "targets" for services. And when services are delivered not just by individuals but by a

bureaucracy, one can see how the students begin to feel they are being treated like "numbers," dots on a bell curve, or "raw materials . . . to be shaped and fashioned into products to meet the various demands of life," as one of the architects of our present public school system glowingly described them earlier in the century (fitting them nicely into his image of schools as "factories"). [10]

Service delivery also tends to place students in a passive role—having services delivered to them. It asks nothing of them except to sit still while the services are "delivered." The students are not active agents in their own behalf. No wonder students keep reporting that the experience is "BORING, BORING, BORING!" [11]

When I was doing the research leading up to Education Through Partnership, I became convinced that any valid model for school management had to see students as the prime workers in the enterprise, not the teachers, as was so often the case in the school management analyses I was studying. Although good teachers have always known this instinctively, educational management models often miss this key point because they define education as the "delivery of instructional services." In that kind of model, the teacher becomes the prime producer, and the student is relegated to being either the product or the raw material--in either case inert, passive and dehumanized. [12]

If we want to disengage kids from drugs we have to engage them in something else. "Delivering services" to them will never do it. Some of the most successful drug prevention programs have recognized the importance of "engagement" and provide recreational, community service, or entrepreneurial activities for students to "engage" in. But so long as students' basic school experience from 9 to 3 every day is the "boring, boring, boring" process of having instructional services delivered to them, we have to expect that many students will look for something more "engaging"--e.g. drugs and drug culture.

How can we shift from a "services" approach to a "caring" approach in public schools—from a dehumanizing, passivity-producing, disengagement model to an engagement model—from a delegation model to a partnership model?

A first step is to recognize the importance of making this shift. The problem is a little like the problem with the goal of ensuring success for all children: many people assume this already is the operating goal when it really isn't. Likewise, people may assume that schools are set up as caring institutions, designed to engage students, when they really aren't. Students or parents may blame teachers or school officials for not caring,

or being "boring," but they are not aware that the non-caring, boring behavior comes far less from the personal motives or skills of school staff than from the relationships dictated by the structure of the system.

Public schools are set up as rationalized, bureaucratic institutions to "deliver instructional services." If individual school staff members happen to be caring, engaging people (which many happily are), and they find ways to develop a caring, engaging relationship with the children in their charge (which many unhappily don't because of the institutional constraints), that is a fortunate coincidence. There is nothing in the structure of the system, and its hierarchical relationships, job descriptions, supervisory procedures, accountability systems, or job incentives that call for caring or engagement; and there is much that inhibits it. Indeed, its hyper-rationalized bureaucratized structure is a major contributor to the dehumanization that makes so many children feel "bored," "alienated," and "abandoned" even while society is spending $3000-5000 a year on their schooling.

Even recognizing all this, shifting to a partnership model may still seem like an impossible dream--a truly "mission impossible"-in schools with demoralized staffs, hostile and alienated students, apathetic and unsupportive parents and crime-ridden communities full of unemployment and hopeless, disintegrating families. Yes, it will be difficult. And it will take time and cost money. But is it more difficult or costly than trying--and failing--to educate children and keep them off drugs without making such a shift?

What has been lacking is not so much the means to make this shift, but the political will to do so. This is not what we have been trying to do. Our primary response to problems (when we respond at all) has been to add more services, or to improve the delivery of services, not to change the relationships of the participants. Even potentially helpful efforts like school site planning councils, tend to focus on improving services rather than improving relationships. This is not out of malevolence. It is dictated by the structure of the system, which is a "service delivery" system. The school-site planning councils are usually not expected to do anything other than plan more or better services.

The "school-site" movement is correct in identifying the individual school as a prime arena of action, since the school already functions as a social organism and its values and relationships will largely determine the nature of the relationships of the key participants in teaching and learning. But it is a mistake to focus only on the school level, since both larger communities outside and smaller communities within the school also determine the values and relationships of the participants.

The level above and outside the school is crucial both to give sanction and assistance to changed relationships within the school, and to help enlist parents, peers, and community resources that schools usually cannot reach by themselves. Many parents are fearful of the school because of their own lack of education or vulnerable position as immigrants. Many of them have been turned off by their own bad school experiences either as students or as parents. Many more, accepting the delegation of their children's education to the school, turn a deaf ear even when schools reach out to them: "Why are you bothering me; that's your job." Likewise, non-school agencies, businesses, and students themselves are not used to having schools ask them for help. They are most likely to get engaged if there is a community-wide campaign that helps set the context, alerts people that there is an important new job to do which requires the collaborative efforts of everyone, and provides the vehicles for getting involved.

Such community-wide efforts are needed especially in view of today's family situations. The bad news, of course, is that there are ever more single, working, teen-age, and handicapped parents. The good news is that research shows that the vast majority of them care and would like to help if they are shown how and provided a way to do so that is realistic. [13] Schools usually don't have the resources to do this, and collaboration with other social agencies, churches, community organizations, etc., within an overall community campaign "to help our children" may be the only effective way to do it.

Furthermore, for those children whose parents really can't or won't help, there is the need for other supports—after school study centers in a local church, a "Big Brother" program, college student mentors, a recreation or job counseling program. etc.

In New York there has been much concern about the child abuse and death of Lisa Steinberg—among other things because the various agencies that knew or should have known that something was wrong failed to communicate with each other. One commentator suggests as a first remedy that "schools, hospitals, drug treatment clinics, cops, social workers—everyone who has contact with children showing signs of being abused or neglected—should talk to each other." [14] What has to be realized is that these days, with working parents and disintegrating families, some degree of parental "neglect" is the norm—happily not often to the degree of the tragic Lisa Steinberg, but to a high enough degree to call for collaboration among various agencies not just in the cases of extreme child abuse, but for "normal" children. It might be seen as routine collaboration to respond to routine parental neglect.

Actually modern Western culture (especially in the U.S.) is one of the few cultures in the history of mankind that has placed so much responsiblity on parents. In most human societies all sorts of adults, older children and other institutions are involved in helping younger children grow up. We may have to recreate some of that communal responsibility if we want to survive as a human society.

The "communities" within the school are also important. A school-site planning group will not get far with anything significant if it can't enlist the various formal and informal sub-groups within the school--the teacher, student and parent organizations, as well as teacher cliques and student peer groups. If they are working against you, forget it. If they are part of a collaborative enterprise they have bought into, far more can be achieved than could ever be explained by job descriptions or organization charts.

It's hard to change structures. People take for granted the structures they live and work in, and they find it threatening to reexamine them. Indeed, there is considerable psychological investment in existing structures, even when they are dysfunctional. They provide psychological security--a map of how things are supposed to work and how people relate to one another. Giving up old structures--even mentally--means venturing into unknown territory. It's the old problem of "the devil you know."

Nevertheless, the present structure of public education is becoming so dysfunctional that people are finally beginning to see the need for structural change. [15] The recognition of new educational goals is useful here. If people see educational reform merely as a return to some imagined golden past, there is no need for structural change. But if there is basically a new goal to achieve, it may seem more plausible that we need a new structure to achieve it.

Once it is recognized that there is a structural problem, it is still important to reach some consensus on what kind of better structure to move to. People quite sensibly usually don't give up old structures (either mentally or actually) unless they see at least the outlines of a better structure to replace it. [16]

It will take some time to develop such a consensus, but I believe one may finally be developing. [17] Nor is it necessary to have a complete blueprint to begin shifting. Some people will cling to an old model until a new one is completely designed and established and the old model pulled out from under them, but if the old model is sufficiently dysfunctional, more and more people will begin to experiment with new approaches until a new model takes shape. And that is fortunate, for, while

conceptualization of new models is important, there is no way to move from concepts to reality except through trial and error.

After a lull since the 1960's such experimentation is again beginning. Although most of the reform of the past five years has been within the old model, some reforms are opening paths to a new kind of model: the revival of the alternative school movement, the growth of school volunteers, the increase in peer tutoring and cooperative learning, the movement toward smaller schools, Ted Sizer's Essential Schools, the growth of various avenues for increased voice and choice, school-business partnerships, and experimentation with school-social agency-community collaboration as in New York State's Community School Project.

A major potential breakthrough is developing from new thinking about the teaching profession. The movement for more collegiality and professional responsibility for teachers at the school level, new collaborative models of collective bargaining, teachers' willingness to serve on planning teams with parents, citizens and students, all open possibilities for new models of voice, choice and loyalty that move away from the present bureaucratic, delegation model and the dehumanized relationships that go with it. [18]

The great increase in the talk about restructuring in the last two or three years is also significant, even though much of it is still ill-defined and unimplemented. It shows that the issue is on people's agenda. And perhaps even more important is the increased willingness to face up to the size of the gap between current school achievement and what we need to achieve, since that will motivate the search for new models and sustain the search through the many "errors" inherent in trial and error.

Although the details of a new model are far from worked out, there is increasing interest public schools where adults and students are expected to work together to achieve shared goals in a mutually supportive, success oriented community. It's hard to believe this wouldn't help us with the drug problem. Both the success orientation of the school and the supportive community needed to achieve it, should make schools much less fertile ground for mutually supporting peer groups of alienated, defeated students that now provide such powerful support for school drug culture.

IV. VALUES, INTELLIGENCE, AND AMERICANISM

Partnership is not a panacea. It would provide a much more productive framework for both academic and moral education than our present delegation model, but the partnership model doesn't as such specify the content of either moral or academic education. Much has been written in recent years about needed reforms in both these areas, and there is no space here to recapitulate these discussions. There are some important aspects of both moral and academic education, however, that are often overlooked under our present delegation model of schooling, which must be addressed if schools are to be successful in helping prevent drug abuse.

A. Overcoming the Obstacles to Moral Education

Despite the considerable thought that has been given to reforming moral or "values" education in recent years, many school systems have done very little about this important aspect of education. This is partly due to the neglect of moral education in the training of teachers and administrators, and indeed its weakened position in the whole pseudo-scientific "professionalization" movement in public education over many decades. [19] But it is also due in part to the fears of public school administrators and school boards that moral education would involve them in uncomfortable political entanglements--fears that are enhanced by the delegation model's expectation that school systems must make uniform educational policies for large and diverse populations.

The most obvious fears are of religious controversy. These fears clearly have some basis in view of political efforts to introduce school prayer or other religious teaching into public schools. More subtle fears come from the general pluralism of American society—the concern that there is no way for a public school to teach values without offending one group or another. [20]

The result is that many school systems shy away from a serious attempt to provide strong and effective moral education. They sometimes try to dodge the issue altogether, hoping it will go away, which unfortunately it often does, either because public leaders don't care enough about it, or because they share school officials' fears of arousing controversy. Or the schools try to avoid controversy by various supposedly "value free" approachs to help students develop "skills" for dealing with moral issues. If well implemented these efforts can be useful, but they are no substitute for a strong moral "ethos" for a school, and they sometimes ironically generate their own kind of controversy when parents conclude that they are actually not value free but rather promote a kind of "all-values-are-equal" relativism. [21]

These problems are as much political as pedagogical, and any community must overcome them if it wants its schools to deal effectively with the drug problem (or any number of other moral and behavioral problems).

The first step is to achieve consensus on the importance of moral education. There are clearly difficulties and obstacles to overcome in undertaking effective moral education in a public school system, and they can't be overcome unless the community develops a strong consensus that it is worth the trouble to work through these problems.

Such a consensus should be possible once the issue is seriously addressed. Moral education is clearly essential in any human society, since the human child must learn a large percentage of appropriate behavior. But it is particularly important in a free society, where people have to learn to govern their own behavior, instead of having it governed for them. It should also be clear by now that there is no way for a school to be morally "neutral." It will teach values whether it wants to or not, so the issue is not whether to teach values, but what values to teach and how to teach them.

The task is admittedly more complicated in a pluralistic than in a homogeneous society, but if the difficulty is greater, so is the need for moral education, to allow a diverse population to live and work in harmony. Pluralism is a reason for moral education, not against it.

Once sufficient political will is developed regarding the need for moral education, ways can be found around the various shoals of religion and diverse community values, so long as they are respected as real political and legal problems that require careful and creative thinking, discussion, and leadership. As mentioned above, once people start to communicate with each other, they usually find that, despite their differences of religion, race, class or cultural background, there is more of a core of commonly held values than had been realized, and these can be the basis for a strong school program. [22]

Governor Kean of New Jersey is now trying this type of consensus building on a statewide basis—calling together "a panel of leaders from business, education, government, and religious groups to define . . . 'a common core of enduring values that all New Jerseyans believe should be promoted.'" Once agreed to, the intention is to use this common core to "put a little more moral fiber in our children's educational diet." [23] It remains to be seen how successful this can be on a statewide basis, but the same kind of effort is needed in any case on a community and school level, since people have to have a sense of ownership of any such value statement for it to be effective.

Once the political obstacles to moral education are overcome, there are many effective ways to provide moral education, both in the regular curriculum and in the "hidden curriculum" of the school. [24] A shift to a school-based partnership model will facilitate developing what will work best in a particular school.

B. We must re-create a concept of "childhood"

Even with a will to provide strong moral education, efforts are likely to founder unless a community deals constructively with a fundamental problem--the erosion of adult authority.

In the "good old days," children supposedly could be told what they could or couldn't do, and they would obey. This myth has never been true, but in the past it had more potency--directions from adults had legitimacy even if they were not universally obeyed. That is now less true--even with officially designated "authority figures" such as those in school. And of course the problem is worse in schools where there is alienation between school, community, and children.

What's to be done about this? Mostly what we do now is a lot of hand-wringing and blame-placing. Conservatives blame liberals for having "destroyed the moral fiber of our youth," and liberals blame conservatives for creating "authoritarian" institutions that drive kids into rebellion and fail to prepare them for responsible, autonomous adulthood.

I suggest more fruitful ways of addressing the problem: First, recognize that, in addition to whatever presumed misguided practices of "liberals" or "conservatives" there may be, there are some objective conditions (i.e. nobody's fault) that have also contributed: One of the most important is that we are, and have been, in a period of profound technological, social, economic, and political change, and in such periods, the authority of adults is inherently weakened. The adult community is confused as to what is right and wrong because values are changing, and this confusion cannot be hidden from children. Under these circumstances, adults cannot speak with the same "authority," regardless of how desirable such authority may be.

Another objective condition is the pluralistic nature of American society mentioned above, which means that adults have many different values and behavior patterns. It's in the nature of human societies that children will learn from many people, not just from their parents. It is impossible, however, for them to get clear, consistent signals in a pluralistic society, and this makes moral learning and authority inherently more difficult.

Facing these real difficulties does not mean giving up, however. I suggest they instead point to the need to come to some agreement about "childhood" —i.e. to develop a new consensus on what it means to be a "child" and how this relates to moral teaching and behavioral authority. This will require adults to "get their act together" in ways that go beyond our current reliance on the formal governmental and institutional relationships to take care of our children's education. The New Jersey project mentioned above is an effort in this direction, but it's at best just a beginning of facing up to this problem.

Perhaps our society is ready for a synthesis of the "liberal" and "conservative" positions about "childhood" and "authority." If liberals would agree that children should be more subject to the control of adults, even while they are learning to become responsible and autonomous, and conservatives would agree that children have to be given more freedom to learn how to become responsible and autonomous, even while they remain under the control of adults, there might me more opportunity for consensus on effective moral education. The position that children can't learn to be responsible unless they make all decisions for themselves is just as wrong as the position that any degree of freedom for children will lead to perdition.

Recently a study on young people not going to college found that "large corporate employers tend to hire young workers in their early to mid-20's for entry level jobs. The employers reason that young people just out of high school are 'not responsible' or 'not ready to settle down yet.'" [25] In other words, they are still acting like children, even though they are of adult age. Perhaps if children were treated more like children when they're children, they would act more like adults when they're adults.

Perhaps the crisis over childhood drug use can serve as the occasion for forging such a new consensus about the legitimacy of adult authority. Confused as they may be about many things, adults can see much more clearly than children the disastrous and sometimes irreversible harm that can come from drug use, which makes this a logical area for agreement on the justification for unequivocal adult authority as opposed to youthful autonomy or experimentation. This does not mean that young people should not be involved in campaigns against drug use, as they have been very successfully, for instance, in the case of drunk driving—only that there is a legitimate place also for clear adult authority.

It may be a lot to expect agreement along these lines with so many passionate advocates on all sides of the issue, but the noise made by advocates in polarized situations is often misleading. It's often found that there are many moderate people whose voices have not been heard (in part because the media do not see their moderate positions as "newsworthy"), and who would welcome such a consensus.

It would also help, of course, if children—all children—could sense that society cares about them and cares for them—in ensuring that all of them get the kind of health care and education needed to grow up whole.

C. Children, like adults, are social animals.

One aspect of the "childhood" question that needs special attention is the tendency of schools to treat students as individuals rather than as members of social groups, even though children have begun to function as social beings long before they arrive at school. The teacher may deliver instruction to a group, but each student is expected to learn individually—again, part of the "winners and loosers" game. Students helping each other is almost viewed as cheating. Some of this may come from a misapplication of individualistic values, but some of it comes also from the current bureaucratized service delivery model of education, with children gathered in groups for efficiency of "delivery," but without consideration of how they might most effectively engage in the learning process.

One of the great merits of the cooperative and "teams" learning approaches is their recognition of the power of combining social and educational engagement. When students encourage and help each other, a whole new dynamic develops, which not only greatly increases the efficiency of teaching and learning, but also engages the child socially. [26] Only this kind of "partnership" can compete with the powerful social attraction of a student drug culture,

Furthermore such a context should provide a favorable climate not just to tell students about drugs and their dangers, and to enforce anti-drug regulations, but to enlist the help of the students themselves in preventing drug use and abuse among their peers. If students can help each other learn geometry through peer tutoring and cooperative learning, they can help each other stay away from mind-boggling drugs. And, in fact, experience seems to show that the most successful drug prevention programs are be peer-based, and sometimes peer-run. These efforts can be even more powerful when they are part of a school context that says "we are all working together to ensure the educational success of all of us"—in other words not just a negative program to stop drugs but a positive program to accomplish a commonly shared goal.

D. Mixed Messages

Even with greater agreement about "childhood," adult authority, and the social nature of learning, we have to be careful about mixed messages. Although there is widespread consensus in the adult community about the undesirability of children's use of dangerous drugs, we tend to confuse information about drugs, values we wish children to develop about them, and directives we expect to be obeyed. All three of these types of message are necessary and appropriate—but they are often muddled together in ways that may dilute their impact.

The Department of Education's Schools Without Drugs, a publication with many good suggestions, recommends that schools teach that drug use is "wrong," "harmful." and "will not be tolerated." [27] These are three quite different messages. Each of them has its own problems of effective communication, and unless they are disentangled, they are likely to get confused. Let's look at them in reverse order.

The "will not be tolerated" concept should be clear enough. But schools often don't deliver it clearly. Either the message is muted to begin with, or it is confused with "requests" for "responsible behavior," solicitations for "concern for your own future," information about drugs, statements regarding their "danger," etc. Even if the wording of the message is unequivocal, the real message received by the students may be that drug use will be tolerated, because it in fact is tolerated, despite the verbal messages.

The "will not be tolerated" message, even if unequivocal as a regulation, is often equivocal and ineffective in terms of helping children develop desired values about drug use. To the extent that an effective regulation reduces or eliminates drug use at school it is all to the good, since this reduces the opportunities for children to get into drugs. But its effect on values is problematical and depends a good deal on the context within which it operates. If it is part of a comprehensive and effective anti-drug program, it can probably reinforce other components of the program that convince students not to use drugs. But if it is not part of such a program, such a regulation might have little educational effect (even if effectively enforced), and might even have perverse educational effects on some students.

For one thing, the "will not be tolerated" message usually applies only "on the school grounds and at school functions" (Schools Without Drugs, p. 21), since this is the only jurisdiction of the school. And if drug use can't take place at school, and the conditions for it are ripe, it will certainly take place outside of school hours, with much the same

devastating effect. In other words, because of the limited jurisdiction of the school, "drugs won't be tolerated" can end up meaning "don't do it here," and for some students that can almost be an invitation to do it elsewhere. Since, under the delegation model, schools often do not work in concert with families and other social institutions, it is easy for children to comply with a "won't be tolerated" message in school, and still fall prey to drugs. This, of course, does not mean that drugs should be tolerated at school—only that the message is of limited educational value by itself.

Furthermore, even a clear "don't do it here" message, especially if poorly enforced, can be a goad to "adventure," "macho," rebellious, peer-encouraged or attention-getting drug use in school. The extent to which this occurs probably has a lot to do with the mixed messages of other components of the program as they relate to today's children. [28]

The "harmful" message serves quite a different function. It purportedly involves factual, cognitive learning which it is hoped students will take into account in deciding "responsibly" not to use drugs. Actually, however, the "harmful" message is a mixture of factual and judgmental messages. This can be seen more clearly in its close cousin, "drugs are dangerous." Up to a point, children are admired for doing things that are dangerous—it's part of the testing process of growing up. The question of whether a child will agree that something is too dangerous to undertake may depend a good deal on the context and who delivers the message. Furthermore, there is the problem that if these fact/judgment messages are delivered in a context that is trying to encourage informed, responsible behavior, they may unintentionally undercut the "not tolerated" message. The subliminal message for some children can be: "It's up to you to decide."

The "drug use is wrong" message is presumably intended to counteract this. "Wrong," however, blatantly involves moral judgments, and we have seen that many school systems have not worked out effective approaches to moral education. For many children "bad" means "good." This is not just a cute little game young people like to play (although sometimes it can be); it reflects a profound breakdown of the moral authority of adults. Children in America today society learn what is "good" and "bad" to a large extent from peers, older children, and some specific adults identified with "youth culture," which is often also a "counter culture" (i.e. "counter" to mainstream adult values). Since this "good" is often the direct opposite of what parents, school officials, and other "authority" figures say is good, it is re-labeled "bad." Conversely, "bad" (as in "drug use is bad") equals "good."

What starts out as a seemingly straightforward intention to "teach" children that drugs are "harmful," "wrong," and "won't be tolerated," can thus end up a quite a muddle of directive, information, and moral judgment—all delivered in a context of adult-child relations in which it is easy to see why children often "don't get the message."

Part of the solution is to make clearer to children that these are indeed different messages—each with its own legitimacy and function. Part of the solution is to recognize that, being different, each of these messages may have to be transmitted in a different way and perhaps by different people to be effective. And part of the solution, since, although different, all three messages should have a unified impact, is to help children integrate these different messages into their own growing intellectual as well as moral development.

E. Drug Abuse and Intelligence

Drug abuse is stupid, as well as wrong and harmful. Shouldn't the development of intelligence therefore help prevent it?

The answer is, Yes. But the the matter is not so simple, as can be seen from the number of otherwise intelligent people who abuse drugs (mostly alcohol in older generations, all kinds of drugs with younger ones). Yet, the question still remains: Shouldn't the development of intelligence help people be less stupid about the use of drugs? If so, which aspects of intellectual development tend to have this effect, and can these aspects be enhanced?

We have made a mistake in separating cognitive and affective education, moral and academic education, and values and intelligence. In the human mind, values are shaped by intelligence, and intelligence, as it becomes built into the human personality, can function like a value. Despite Hume's assertion that "reason is the slave of the passions," reason can also help to mould passions, so that, as one learns the value of intelligent living, what were once passions can seem no longer desirable. [29]

The ancient Greeks seem to have understood this better than we moderns. We have so focused on intelligence as an instrument for helping us get what we want—that we have neglected to see its value in helping us decide what we want. As a result we tend to develop intelligence as a tool, and not as a value. The "love of truth" has a quaint ring to it these days; it doesn't seem to describe what we are trying to instill in our pragmatic pursuit of "skills" and "competencies." Yet the Greeks

saw Truth, Goodness, and Beauty as united, and education—or the development of Virtue—as a way to help a person learn to seek all three together.

How does this relate to drugs? There are at least two types of stupidity involved in drug abuse: (1) lack of information, and (2) failure to use information intelligently. Lack of information about drugs seems to be the lesser of the problems. [30] It is true that some children, particularly younger ones, take drugs whose dangers they do not understand, and sometimes don't even know what drug they are taking. Sometimes children don't listen to information they are given about drugs, just as they often don't listen to the wonderful lessons we deliver to them about history or quadratic equations. The cure for this kind of stupidity presumably is to find more effective ways to make sure the information gets across.

Unfortunately, however, the bigger problem seems to be the more complicated kind of stupidity. Many kids (just like adults) have received the information that a drug is dangerous, but they use it anyway. We can say this is "stupid," but the question of whether and how the development of "intelligence" in schools can help to correct this kind of "stupidity" is far from simple.

In the first place, it may not seem "stupid" to the child. He may "know" the drug is dangerous, but have such a strong desire to escape from some psychological hurt, or to win approval of his peers, that he uses his intelligence to weigh the risks and comes out in favor of taking the drug. Or he may actually want to do something dangerous. The fact that he comes out with the wrong answer doesn't mean he isn't using considerable intellectual powers.

In other words, to the extent that we develop "intelligence" as an instrument—as a means to achieve our ends—it may actually facilitate drug use in many cases. As we have seen, the same child who is acting so stupidly in taking drugs, may be outwitting a whole brigade of intelligent adults who are trying to devise strategies to stop him. Intelligence, thought of as an instrument, is value free. It can be used either to avoid drugs or to take them, depending on what the child wants to do, which throws us back then into questions of value and authority.

But that is not the end of the story for the possible role of intelligence in preventing drug abuse. Intelligence can be a value as well as an instrument. "You cannot think the truth," said Josiah Royce, "without loving it." Schools <u>can</u> develop a love of learning and a love of truth in children—even quite young children—and these values can displace other passions. And

schools can help children develop a habit of reflective thoughtfulness. As they learn to seek what is true, they also develop a sense of what is right and beautiful. They can learn to order their values in ways that can make impulsive and self-destructive drug taking seem repulsive rather than attractive.

The love of learning and truth is not the only passion that can counter the attractions of drugs. For some kids it has been the love of sports, religion, their girl friend, or sometimes even of their parents (bless their hearts!). But developing a love of learning is the peculiar responsibility of the school. It is the school that can induct children into a value system in which seeking what is right can become an overriding passion, against which the pollution and perversion of drug abuse will seem abhorrent.

This may seem a little unrealistic when laid against the reality of some of today's schools—particularly drug drenched inner city schools where even minimal skills seem a distant dream for many children. But this is what education is—or should be—all about, and denying children of whatever background this kind of education not only denies them the levels of academic achievement they need for today's world, but denies them a value system that can help them turn aside the appeal of drugs.

Someone should look and see whether inner city schools that have implemented Mortimer Adler's Paideia approach, or Ted Sizer's "essential" schools model—or any other effort at real learning, rather than just "skills" development—have a lower incidence of drug use. I bet they do. The intellectual values of such programs would not be the only element that might help reduce drug use (since such program usually also have other elements of partnership as well), but they should help—especially in view of the other drug inducing forces at work in American culture.

F. Drug Culture: Alien or All-American?

The drug epidemic is so horrifying—tens of thousands of people laying waste to their own lives and lives around them—that one's first reaction is to see it as something totally alien, as if some strange disease had invaded from outer space (or at least from a foreign country) to infect our people and drive them into such irrational, aberrational, and self-destructive behavior.

The more one looks at it, however, the more one sees that in many respects drug use reflects perfectly normal human reactions to the conditions confronting its victims, and furthermore, reactions which may be quintessentially American.

The normal human reactions have been much analyzed: the escape from frustration, failure, and low self-esteem, the desire for peer approval, the attraction of quick pleasure in otherwise unsatisfying lives. These factors have enticed people into drugs all over the world, throughout history, and in all sorts of different cultures. There as also been considerable discussion of special aspects of current American culture that enhance drug use: its hedonism, its infantile emphasis on instant gratification, its over-reliance on drugs for "health," etc. What impresses me, however, is not only the normality of drug use, but the degree to which it may receive additional support from traditional American values that we usually think of as good.

First of all it is adventurous, and Americans want to be adventurous. For generations, Americans were brought up on "The Adventures of . . " this or that folk hero, and today's media reinforce the tradition, with the truly incredible (but enticing) adventures of superspies, daring criminals, and space travelers. Drugs fit right in. They are an adventure. Furthermore, they are a democratic adventure: They are available to everyone, right in the neighborhood. You can take this exciting trip without being a millionaire.

Related to the adventure, there is the value placed on "freedom." American is "the land of the free," and drugs mean freedom to many young people. "No body can tell me what to do." "Don't tread on me." "Don't fence me in." Drugs provide instant freedom (even though they lead to total slavery). Taking them first of all is a "declaration of independence" from the authority of adults and society, and, secondly, once taken, part of their euphoria is the sense of "freedom" they provide.

America is also the "home of the brave." Nobody wants to be "chicken." It's dangerous? So much the better. Even girls don't want to be sissies any more. Drugs again fit right in. The danger is part of the allure, particularly for young people, who want to show how brave they are, and think they will live forever.

Americans, despite their great love for freedom and independence, also love their sociability. Note the beer drinkers in the TV ads: They never drink alone; they are always in happy groups socializing after an exciting day on the slopes or a hard day on the docks. We like to socialize in our dangerous and brave adventures.

In fact, one could argue that our great emphasis on freedom makes our need for sociability all the stronger. Tocqueville noticed this seeming contradiction in Americans: They loudly

proclaim their independence, but everywhere are found in groups. But not groups as in old, established societies that are provided primarily by family, tradition, and established church, but groups of their own choosing and invention, groups of all kinds and descriptions—political, recreational, social, cultural, philanthropic, etc. Even religious grouping is characterized by the same style of sociability: you need not stay in the church provided by family or tradition; if you don't like the church you're in, join another, or find some like-minded friends and form your own church.

In short, we have a style of sociability that fits with our love of freedom, independence, and adventure. And it's wonderfully supportive of drug culture. If our group does different things and has different values from the rest of society, what business is it of anyone else? "We're doing our thing." That it's "our" thing and not just "my" thing, makes it all the more robust and immune to outside corrective pressures. The youth groups we so much deplore and worry about are only aping classic American behavior.

Lastly, economic values. Never overlook them. Drug culture is not only an expression of adventure, freedom and sociability, it is also driven powerfully by an entrepreneurial spirit. A large portion of young people who get involved with drugs get involved not just as buyers but as sellers. The incentives drive them to it: You have to "deal" to stay in the game. It's the easiest way to get the money to feed your habit. The need to gain more customers means luring more and more people into drugs, which is a major reason for the rapid spread of drug abuse once it begins in any community.

And again the economic incentives are dismayingly American: Get rich quick. Be your own boss. Take risks. Be an entrepreneur. It's all so inviting—and so much in accord with what our culture teaches kids is "good."

Where are we led by these thoughts about how "American" our drug problem is? For one thing, they should lead us to appreciate the complexity of the problem: the "bads" of drug abuse are tangled up with many "goods" of American society, and it's easy to see how many children can go astray—especially if they are left on their own to figure out how to translate the culture they see around them into a life style for themselves. It should also reinforce the need for much more effort on the part of adults to address the problems mentioned above: to refashion what we mean my learning, values and childhood, and to create nurturing communities that can help children negotiate these value traps in American culture. Lastly, it should lead us to recognize that the problem goes far beyond the school, and will take something more like a total community campaign, rather than just school reform, if we want to have any serious effect.

V. WINNING THE WAR AGAINST DRUGS—A SUMMARY

"The specter of drugs is haunting the Americas," warns a lead editorial in the New York Times. It urges an all-out war against the "evil empire" of international drug cartels, smuggling rings, and corrupt foreign potentates. [31]

Education seems a feeble weapon in such a war. Yet, in referring almost in passing to the "ever-growing demand in the United States," the Times editorial shows the essential role education must play if we are to have any chance of winning this war. I don't know how to stop the supply of drugs. One thing is sure, however: Whatever is done to stop present sources of supply, others will grow up to meet the demand. It is just too powerful and profitable, and will overwhelm whatever forces any "war" can array against suppliers.

We must reduce the demand for drugs or the war will surely be lost.

Against this imperative we have to look honestly at what our public schools are actually doing with regard to drugs—not just what they intend to do, or what some of their better drug prevention programs do on a small scale: What they actually do, by the way they now operate, is both to push children into drugs through massive, preventable school failure and alienation, and pull them into drugs through school-based drug culture. And all of this on a vast scale—in thousands of schools all across the country.

Of course, these school-related factors are not the only forces helping to generate the huge demand for drugs in our society. But they are forces for which we are politically responsible: We have created these forces through public action, by the way we have structured public education, and we are responsible for the results, whether we intend them or not.

Drug education, which has been our main response to this situation up until now, is useful when properly done, and it should be strengthened and improved. But it is a feeble weapon at best when arrayed against the forces arrayed against us. The "big guns" that must be brought to bear in the battle if we are to have any chance of winning, must be a thoroughgoing revamping of our public school system—to build success-oriented schools capable of helping all our youngsters develop the competence and self-confidence they need to survive in today's world. This can only be done through a restructured educational system, with much more productive relationships among those working inside the schools and a much more powerful partnership between the school, home and community than is now possible in our present "delegation-bureaucracy" model of public schooling.

FOOTNOTES

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3. USA Today December 7, 1987, p. D1.

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